

## WHEN TO HOLD COMMUNIONS.

BY I. D. BOWMAN.

Answer to Bro. Hammer's question in BRETHREN EVANGELIST, May 16th, '94.

1. "Does the brethren church as a body advocate any doctrine that would absolutely necessitate the consultation of the almanac more closely than the Bible for its establishment?" No. Neither as a body or local congregation. I am acquainted with nearly all our congregations and I think I am safe in saying, not one congregation advocates such doctrine.

2. "Is it wrong to partake of the communion at any time save on the fourteenth of the first month?" Is it not so considered by any congregation in the Brethren church.

3 If so how can we know to an absolute certainty when to hold our communion? While the other two questions are not "so" this one deserves an answer the same as if they were.

(1.) It can be ascertained now with the same degree of certainty, that it was, when it was positively commanded in the Bible. The Bible positively commanded the Israelites to keep the fourteenth of the first month. And Christ instituted the ordinances of the Christian church on this same day. I will not take the time or pains to make it clear, because all who prefer to commune on the fourteenth have no trouble to find the day, and it is unnecessary to take pains to show a man a thing if you know he won't do it if he sees it.

A few additional remarks in justice to Bro. Hammer and several of the Brethren churches it is necessary to make the matter more clear. There have been several congregations in the Brotherhood that have preferred to commune on the fourteenth of the first month. These congregations would not censure much less excommunicate any of its members if they communed every day in the year. Bro. Hammer, you have been misinformed. These brethren simply prefer this time.

(a.) Because they have Christ's example.

(b.) Because they understand that Paul recommends that we should keep it the same night that Christ did. See 1 Cor. xi, 2-23.

(c.) Because the blessed Polycarp declares that he had "always observed

it with John the disciple and the rest of the Apostles on that day." Eusebius page 211.

(d.) They believe we could receive great power if as much as convenient all over the Brotherhood we would all receive new life and strength at the same time. Just as set days of fasting and prayer. So all communing with God at once would give us additional inspiration. I know not a member that wants to dogmatize and try to make any person or congregation commune on that time if unwilling. Suppose in the day of judgment it should turn out to be true that Christ communed at that time and the Apostles always did, and we laugh at the time, call it a "moon day" sarcastically, and an "almanac day" and etc. While I commune on any day during the year the more men make fun of it and thus cause me to investigate the more clearly it appears to me that the "moon" day is the day the Apostles observed. And it is at least as safe as any other. I have yet to find the first who has impartially investigated the subject that did not have a preference for the fourteenth.

May God help us to be full of love, entirely unprejudiced, absolutely open to conviction, and lovingly and impartially investigate all subjects. Let us remember that no person or church will be our judge, neither has any person or church all the truth, therefore let us impartially study the word remembering by it we will be judged at the last day.

Lovingly and prayerfully I close.

## WHEN TO HOLD COMMUNION.

BY WM. KOONTZ.

EDITOR EVANGELIST:—In EVANGELIST, March 7th, No. 10, 1894, page (13), is an article from Good's Mill, Va., headed "Salt and pepper for some Virginia Members," written by Bro. Pirkey asking for information, why we have a fixed day in April to observe the ordinances of the Lord's house.

1st. We have Bible authority that Christ did institute and observe the ordinances of his house on the 14th of the first month which no Brother will or can deny. Then if it be proper and right to rely and teach the examples of Christ in other matters, why not good and safe in this? Again, if any Brother can show anything but the example

for the Supper or the night for observing the same, let us hear from him. If we are Bible people let us have it.

Matthew, Mark and Luke each testify they had a supper, a full meal, the time our Lord instituted the ordinances of his house. This we find was the 14th of the first month. Now if it be safe to rely on Christ's precept and examples in some of his church ordinances, why not in all? If it would have been wrong for the Jews to kill the Passover Lamb any other time than the 14th of the first month, can it be wrong for us to commemorate his death and suffering the very day he died? This is proven to be the 14th of the first month, which no one will deny.

Again, all can see we have the same authority for eating the supper and observing all the ordinances of the Lord's house on the 14th of the first month, as any have for eating the supper. For the above examples, see Matthew xxvi, 26, 27; Mark xiv, 23, 24; Luke xxii, 19, 20. Does any one think of celebrating the Independence of the U. S. any other time than the fourth of July? You answer, no. In Eusebius Ecclesiastical History, page 208 and 209, Polycrates set forth in a letter to Victor and the church of Rome makes mention of the Apostle John, Polycarp, Thraseas, Sagares, and others as bishops and martyrs—all these observed the 14th day of the Passover according to the Gospel—deviating in no respect but following the rule of faith, and he, Polycrates, being the eighth bishop, all not in a single instant deviated from the genuine day. We said he therefore observed the genuine day neither adding thereto nor taking therefrom. Also said the seven before him always observed the day when the people the (Jews) threw away the leaven. Then adds he, at that time was sixty five years in the Lord and had conferred with the Brethren throughout the world and had studied all the Scriptures, then adds he is not alarmed at the threatenings to intimidate him.

Now, my dear Brethren, these are some of the reasons why we observe the ordinance of the Lord's house on above date. Hoping the Brethren will bear with us for doing what we believe the Bible teaches, we also know they who will live godly shall suffer persecution. You can call us cranks or moon men, or anything else, it will not offend us in the least, we haven't any objections to the salt and pepper appellation in the article referred to for salt is a preservative. If we look back behind the council of the great sanhedrim we find the Lord's people were all "moon men." It was the